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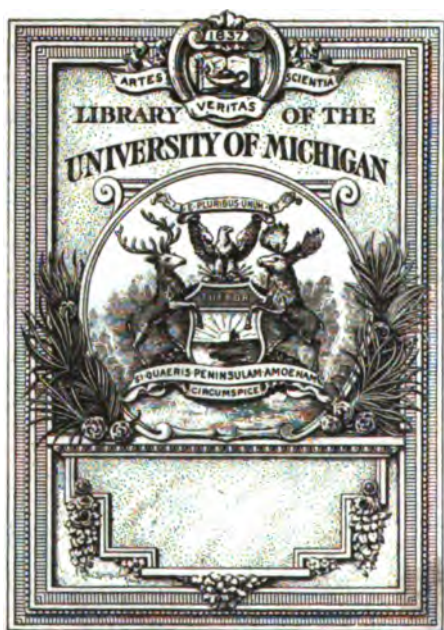
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"Some great cause, God's new Messiah"

MESSIAH PULPIT

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(Being a continuation of *Unity Pulpit*, Boston)

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GEO. H. ELLIS
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BACK AGAIN TO WORK.

I FIND my text in the tenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, one clause of the thirty-third verse,—“Thou hast well done that thou art come.”

“The man without a country” could have found very little pleasure in travel. He had no point of departure, no place where his heart was anchored, and to which he might return. I have always found—if I may use a phrase that sounds like an Hibernicism—that coming back again was the pleasantest part of going away.

I hope that all of you have been away during the past few months. I congratulate you on your coming back and facing once more the tasks, the labors, taking up once more the burdens of life. I am sorry for you if there are any here who have not been able to go away. Those of us who have been have brought experiences, memories, inspirations, that are a solace to us when we stop and think, that are rest when we are weary, that are life and impulse when we face the labors that await us.

Some of you, perhaps, have been in the mountains. You have looked unto the hills, as did the Psalmist, from whence he felt that divine help came. You have sat in their shadows. You have felt that here was something strong, something mighty, something enduring. I have pictures of mountains that are to me a perennial possession. I remember Rainier or Tacoma. I love the latter name,—the grandest mountain I have seen in all the world; perhaps impressing me so because I could see it all, from base to summit, green with its grasses and its trees half-way up, white as it kissed the blue of the heavens, with its thousands of feet of altitude. I may never see it again; but the

picture can never be taken away from me. It is a possession, a part of the wealth of my life.

I have seen, as have you, I trust, this summer, beautiful landscapes, trees; waters lying still in a lake, or a brook winding through the grasses onward to seek the river and the sea. You have listened to bird-songs. You have caught glimpses of these messengers of the air. I have pictures of them in my mind fairer than I have ever seen on canvas,—one beautiful bluebird, wings edged and tipped with black, and with a breast like a robin, that will flit so long as memory lasts through this inner world. It may be winter, it may be stormy, the heavens may be covered with clouds; but that bird will ever flit in the sunshine for me, and no power can ever take him away.

Some of you have sat by the seaside or have crossed the Atlantic. You have listened to the eternal song that the white fingers of the waves play upon the sand and the shingle of the beach; and the music will sing to you so long as life shall endure.

You have been privileged to look up to the night sky,—as Shakspeare says,

“Thick inlaid with patines of bright gold,”—

crowded with suns,—suns surrounded by invisible worlds that lead us off into infinity, and suggest the multifarious life of the great worlds beyond us, and that perhaps we shall some time be privileged to explore.

You have seen sunsets—gorgeous in color, glorious in beauty—that will never be taken away from you. You have seen the rising of the moon. You have watched her at the full, when her light has quenched the stars, and she, as Wordsworth says,—

“Doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare.”

You have brought back from the country, I trust, rest. You have brought back a new access of physical power.

You have brought back these pictures that will remain in the inner galleries of the mind. You have brought back inspirations. You have come with a fresh taste for labor. I hope your experience is like mine. I am always, if possible, a little more anxious to get to work than I was to stop it,—when my health is equal to it,—more anxious to take up my task than I was to lay it down. I trust that in this spirit you have come,—that we have all been away and been blessed in the absence.

We have a way of saying when we and our friends are away, "Everybody is out of town." Perhaps it is worth while for us to stop just a moment, in passing, and consider who this everybody is. Everybody out of town! Just a little blessed, privileged fraction ever gets out of town for a vacation. Great multitudes, masses, have no opportunity for visiting the country, sailing across the sea, enjoying the shadows of the mountains, listening to the murmurs of the brooks or the songs of birds. I saw in May last, before I left, mothers with their babies seeking some little place of shelter on the curb or in the shadow of a building, down on the East Side, trying to get a breath of air; and I suppose they have been trying all summer long.

The mass of people has been toiling while we have rested and rejoiced; and they have been glad to be able to work every day, so that the wage might not be lessened, that the income might not cease. While we are considering that everybody has been out of town, and are rejoicing over our own experiences, let us not forget this other side of life; and let the privileges that come to us only inspire us with a tenderer sympathy and a truer longing to be of help to these less fortunate than we.

Back again to work! The old writer who has given us the present form of the early chapters in Genesis seems to me singularly unfortunate when he pronounces that work is a curse, when he intimates that it was a misfortune for Adam and Eve to be expelled from the garden and turned

into the wilderness world outside. Work a curse? It is the one great crowning blessing of the world. God was never kinder to us than when he made it the law that by the sweat of our brows should we eat bread; when he made it the law that, "if any man will not work neither shall he eat." Work is not a curse. Think for a moment. I know that through the ages the societies that have been developed have looked upon the laborer as an inferior order of person. The men who have devoured, have robbed, have fought,—these are the men who have considered themselves gentlemen. They have looked upon the toilers as unfortunate and belonging to a lower grade of humanity.

And yet just think a moment. Go back to the time when this world was a wilderness, and man was just beginning to find out his capacity and his power, and take what has been accomplished since then, and remember that everything that has been wrought to make this world fair and fine and sweet and noble has been the result of work. Work has turned every wilderness into a farm, if it has become a farm; into a city park, if it has become a park; into a city street, if it has become a city street. It is labor that has accomplished it all, that has transformed the face of the world, made it over, until, if one who saw it on the morning of creation could see it now, he would not recognize it as the same planet singing and swinging through the blue.

Work has not only transformed the face of the earth. What has it accomplished with the ocean? In this Book of Revelation, in the coming kingdom of God, in the perfect condition of things, it is stated, "There shall be no sea." It seemed to the writer that the sea was an evil, a barrier. He believed it was a wild waste that could not be cultivated or ploughed or reaped. The ancient writers looked thus upon the sea and the ocean. To-day we know that they are the life of the world, and we know now how to adapt our arts to the fact. We have turned the Atlantic and Pacific into ferry-ways; and we have covered all the waters of the world

with our ships, with our pleasure yachts, with our sailing-boats of one kind and another, until the ocean is the world's highway of pleasure and of commerce.

And, then, we look at the higher achievements, as we are accustomed to call them, because they deal with the higher activities of man. We look at the pictures. Think what all the galleries of the world contain! Think over the names of the artists with which you are familiar. Remember the paintings that they have left us as a legacy for all time; and all these beautiful creations are the result of human effort and power. Think of the statuary; and how laboriously, how patiently, week after week and year after year, men have worked to create these exquisite figures. Think of all the poems, the dramas, the histories, the stories that have been written, and the years of labor that have gone to the creation of these. Think of all the music that echoes through the atmosphere of the world,—and remember that patient and systematic toil is the magician that has created all this. Whatever is grand and noble and fine and fair means systematic labor. "Genius," some one has said, "is an infinite capacity for taking pains." At any rate, no genius has ever produced the results he has wrought except at the expense of hard work. However richly he may be endowed, it is work, work, work, that has made the world beautiful and fair.

And, then, not only that. Do you ever turn to look at the other side of it, and think that it is work that has made man? It is work that has made us, all of fine and fair and noble that we are. Those people that live still in their Gardens of Eden,—and there are whole tribes of them in different parts of the world,—who have no "curse" of labor laid upon them; who can play all day long and sleep all night; who find all they need to eat growing upon the trees, all that they need to drink running lazily at their feet,—these people are what? Savages, barbarians, uncultivated in hand, uncultivated in eye, uncultivated in ear, unculti-

vated in mind, uncultivated in conscience, uncultivated in heart,—not men, not women, measured by the higher standards with which we are accustomed to test ourselves.

It is work, and hard work, that has made us able to think, that has built the very substance of our brains, that has trained the eye so that it can see, detect nice distinctions, fine shapes and colors, that has trained the ear so that it can hear,—indeed, it is labor literally that has created eye and ear and brain, and given the hand its cunning, and made us masters of ourselves and of the world.

Work, then, a curse? Did I not say well it is the divinest blessing that God has bestowed upon man?

But now I wish to point out two or three conditions of work that are common, not among the poor only, but among the rich, perhaps, quite as truly, which are curses, and which in the coming year, as in all years, need by every thoughtful person to be guarded against.

There are people who fancy that there is some sort of virtue in work for its own sake. I have heard people boast that they have not taken a vacation for years; and they seemed to expect that I would admire them for it. I did not admire them at all. There are people who could afford to go away who have not been. I am sorry for them. They have either felt that it was a virtue for them to stay at home, or else they have not cultivated in themselves, or have allowed to die out, those tastes and faculties which would have enabled them to enjoy God's blessed universe outside the town. These people can have my sympathy or pity if they want them; but they cannot have my admiration. This excessive work is a curse.

I have for years been one of those who believed in shortening the hours of labor. I speak now of labor in the technical sense. In the truest sense of the word, all the people in the world who are worth anything are laborers. But we speak of wage-earners in a technical sense. I believe in shortening their hours. For their sake? Yes, and

for our sakes, too; for the world's sake. Why? A rich man, if he chooses to work eighteen hours a day, can do so; if he chooses to work two hours a day, he can do so: he is free. I know rich men who work a good deal more than eight, than ten hours; but here is the distinction between them and the class of people for whom I am pleading. These men are free: they do it voluntarily, because they choose to do so; and they have already in possession results of leisure. They are educated at least somewhat; their eye and ear are trained, they can enjoy music, they can appreciate literature. All the sides of life that make up the refinements of civilization, as we call them, they have learned, perhaps, to taste. They are open to them at any rate; and they can learn if they choose.

But the common laboring man is not thus cultivated or trained. He knows nothing about literature or art. He, perhaps, has no love for music or training in a musical direction. How is he to acquire these? How is he to become, in the highest sense of the word, civilized? He must have leisure if he is ever to be anything but a drudge. He must have leisure. He must have time to think. He must have time to read. He must have time to learn to care for music and the sweet and high and fine things of the world.

But you say to me, If we give these men leisure, they only abuse it. I grant it, in perhaps the larger number of cases; but is all the abuse of leisure on the part of the poor men and laborers? Are there no rich men who abuse leisure? Are there no cultivated men who abuse leisure? No matter if they do at first abuse it: they must have it; and we must teach them not to abuse it, to learn the meaning and worth of life, to learn the high and fine things that make up manhood and womanhood. And we must give them time, so that they can turn their attention in these directions.

Too much work is a curse. For what does it mean? If a man is obliged to work just as many hours as he can fairly

and easily keep awake, just to get bread enough to eat, just to get a sufficient quantity of drink, just to pay the rent of a shelter in which to guard himself against the storm and sleep at night,—if his whole life is just that, he is doomed to be simply an animal. There is no possibility of his climbing up into brain and conscience and heart and spirit; for he has no time. He has no strength left for these things, no ability to think or feel in any of these directions. Too much work, then, is a curse.

Let us, then, sympathetically deal with these people who are pleading for more leisure, in order that they may learn what it means to be men.

There is another kind of labor which is not a blessing; and that is the unrequited work of the world, the work that does not attain its end or any high and noble end, that is simply the grinding toil of day after day, week after week, year after year, ending in hopelessness, discouragement, and despair. It is not always the poor people that go through this experience. I know men not very poor, not those that we would class as poor, who have labored and struggled until in mid-life or a little beyond. Everything they had tried to build crumbles in their hands; and they find themselves with less heart, less power, less ambition, than they had when they were younger, facing the world about where they were, perhaps, when they were twenty. They have struggled, they have labored, practically for naught. We will hope that the results have been wrought out in character, thought, feeling, inspiration, soul life; that they have made themselves better by the process, if they have not attained their hearts' desire. But we cannot but look with sympathetic pity upon those people who struggle and strive, and get nothing back; who stand at forty or fifty where they were when they were young, only that the hair is thinner and the face wrinkled and the eyes have the discouraged look of those who have not attained.

I know a woman fitted for all high and fine things, with



a taste for music, for literature, for all that is sweet in social life, but doomed all her years through so far to toil in a little round because of her husband's ill-health, his inability to take his place among men and do a man's day's work. This is the kind of toil that seems pathetic and sad to me.

And there are men among the laboring classes—to use that technical phrase again, and thus save the trouble of circumlocution in explaining—who toil year after year with no hope. I have great sympathy for the striking miners in Pennsylvania to-day. I am not going to preach about them. I am not going to pronounce any judgment upon them, because I do not know. I wish to use them simply as an illustration. I suppose there are persons who know who is to blame, whether it is the employers or employed, or whether partly one and partly the other. I have no inside information on the subject; but I pity them. For suppose they are children; suppose they are unreasonable, and that their demands are unreasonable; suppose they are well paid, as much pay as the operators can afford to give them; suppose all you please in favor of the operators,—I pity the men. And, if they are not wise, I pity them all the more; and, if they are only children, I pity them all the more; and, if they are untrained and passionate, I pity them all the more. And, if they cannot see where their interests lie, then I pity them all the more.

If you and I were in their places, drudging under the ground, no matter if only for four or six hours a day, and had nothing else to look forward to until the day when what was left of us went underground for good, we should not consider our lot a fortunate one.

This kind of work is not a blessing. Let us, then, who have struggled up on to a higher level, as we think, and are not compassed about by these conditions,—let us look sympathetically, and act, so far as we can, helpfully towards the solution of these difficult and dark problems.

There is one kind of work about which I wish to speak a

moment; and this concerns almost exclusively the rich. Though, when I use the word "rich," perhaps I ought to explain that I do not know just where the dividing line is between poor people or people who are comfortably off and rich people. I remember, when I was a boy, a man had come home from California, and was able to live at the country tavern in the village and pay three dollars a week board; and I thought he must be very wealthy to be able to do that. I speak of this simply to show that our standards change with years and conditions.

Who is a rich man? For the purpose I have in mind, he is a man who can live easily and comfortably, and do about as he pleases; a man who, perhaps, if he chose to live quietly, could retire, and get along on his income. This is the kind of man I have in mind; and what I wish to say about him is this: It seems to me that so many times these men make work an end in life, and not a means. They work simply for the sake of working, to-morrow and next week and next year, and keeping on working. As I said, work in itself, and as an end, is not a whit better than idleness. Work is good, if it issues in good, if it accomplishes good; but, when a man turns himself into a mere working machine, and works for the sake of working, with no higher or human end in view, then in his case it becomes a curse, and tends to degrade him, and puts him on a lower level.

To illustrate what I mean, take Darwin: Darwin worked like a slave, all his life long, to perfect his studies and give the world the result of his magnificent achievements in the way of scientific discovery. But he gave himself so exclusively to this work that almost everything else in him atrophied and died out. He lost all taste for music, for art, and literature. He said in his old age he had lost it. Why? Merely because he never took any time to train himself in these matters; and, naturally, that which was not trained became stunted, and died.

I had a friend in Boston, a lawyer, who made a success in



life; but he told me, with a pathetic sense of what he had been about in his later years, that when he was young he had a love for literature, that he wrote, and might have cultivated himself in that direction, but that it had all gone, and that all he cared for now was to make some more money after he had made enough.

This is the kind of work on the part of the race that is not a blessing, but is a curse. How many young men start out and say, I am going to achieve such and such a success, become rich, lay aside money, and then I am going to retire and—what? Live. What are the chances in a case like this? He never retires and never lives. He spends all his life getting ready to live; and, before he gets ready, he dies. He lives simply as a money-making machine, grand in itself, provided you do not degrade something higher into this machine, and provided you make the money for some noble end. But if you simply become a money-making machine, and make money for the sake of making money, I call it pretty pitiful poor business.

You are worth more than that. There is something grander in life's possibility than all that. The mind, the heart, the conscience, the ability to serve your fellow-men,—these are better than that. I used to have a friend who told me he was going to work until he got a million; and then he was going to give away everything beyond that. He was waiting till he had a million to become a man. I have never heard that he got a million; and I do not think he will live a great many years more.

This kind of work is a curse. Why not, when you are able, retire and give the younger men a chance? And then another thing. Oh, if I could with this appeal wake up the minds and consciences of this country! In London there are rich men who take charge, for no pay, of public affairs. It is men like these who govern the city; and it is clean, and it is well done, and there is no dishonesty about it. These men have no temptation to dishonesty. They have

not a host of friends to look after. These cities of ours are corrupt, as corrupt as can be, almost, for the lack of interest in them of our noblest and best men. If a sufficient number of men in New York,—men who are abundantly wealthy, over and over and over again rich,—if enough of them would stop simply piling up more money, and turn their attention to public affairs, we could have a clean New York, one to be proud of.

Is not this something worth living for rather than to be rated as having another extra million?

This kind of labor is anything but a blessing.

I have said that fortunate are those who have something to do. There is another class of rich people in all our great cities who have attained at the top of society the distinction of the idlers that I referred to a moment ago as at the bottom of society. They have reached a point at which they do not wish to do anything except amuse themselves. The man, I think,—and I ask you to consider whether I am unduly severe,—who simply amuses himself, who takes out of the reserve of society the means for existence, and does nothing for the world,—the man who does this, I think, is a thief. I think he is more immoral than the immoral people who are arrested on the streets. All his tremendous power,—the power of his inherited position, intelligence, opportunity, wealth,—all this in the face of the world's great appalling needs used simply for amusement!

Do you know that the world has accumulated so little that it is almost on the edge of starvation all the time? If we should stop production, the world would be empty of life in five years, perhaps in three. And yet some men think they have the right to take all they desire, and add not one single grain to the world's accumulation.

Work, true work, work consecrated to the happiness, the intelligence, the uplifting of man,—this is, indeed, noble. No man, whatever he may be doing, if he is filling his place, is doing something that needs to be done, ought to be con-

sidered as dishonored by his labor. The man who wields a spade or a pick or a crow-bar is unspeakably more worthy than the idler, in whatever class of society he may be; and the man who does this, if it is his share in making the world healthy and beautiful and good, is a gentleman in possibility, if he chooses to be a gentleman. And the men of the past, — in the boasted days of chivalry, — those who have looked down on toil, these are barbaric in comparison.

I have been living in this age of chivalry during the summer. I have visited fifteen or twenty of the famous old French châteaux where the kings used to hold their courts before Louis XIV. built Versailles in the neighborhood of Paris. I have resurrected, by reading, the life of those times; and they were simply horrible. Any man who looks back with a sigh, and thinks that the poetry and glamour of romance are all in the past, and are not with the toilers, the users of the pick, the managers of steam-engines, those who delve in the mines, — these, it seems to me, have most pitifully reversed their estimate of what is noble and true. The best poetry is not in the past. Kipling is beginning to teach us — and other writers are following him — that the poetry of the world is in the midst of the world's work and achievement; that these are of the real chivalry, living lives of high romance, who, as the sons and the daughters of God, are making the world over, and transforming it into the likeness of the kingdom of heaven.

Father, we thank Thee that we are permitted to have some little share in Thy work of making this world an Eden, and of building here in the hearts and lives of men Thy perfect kingdom. Let us consecrate ourselves to this toil, and rejoice in it. Amen.

And now, as we turn and go about our occupations, no matter what business we are engaged in, it is God's power we are using to carry that business on,— God in our minds, bodies, hearts, consciousnesses, leading us in the ways that are right ; God moving our machinery for us, whether it is electricity, steam, or water power. Whatever it is, it is the manifestation of the tireless life and force of God, our Father. If there is any beauty, of a flower, in a child's face, wonder in the eyes of some one we love, that is God. Wherever there is light, it is God, the power ; wherever there is order, it is God, the law ; wherever there is majesty, as in the mountains, it is God, thrilling and lifting us ; God in the infinite variety, the rhythm, and movement, the tireless uplift and sink of the sea ; God in the air, cooling, disinfecting, cleansing, healing,— God everywhere.

Duty, truth, love, power, care, helpfulness, pity, inspiration, aspiration,— “in him we live and move and have our being.” The world is no longer secular for six days and sacred the seventh. If we understand it, it is all sacred. We are always in the presence of God ; and, wherever we are, we may kneel and be in the innermost sanctuary of his temple. God is our Father, and God is love.

Let us be conscious, O Thou high and holy One, that we are in Thy presence ; and so let the comfort and help of Thy presence be ours. Amen.

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BY

REV. ROBERT COLLYER

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To the Readers of Messiah Pulpit:—

With this number closes the twenty-sixth year of the continuous publication of my sermons. This has entailed much labor, and the somewhat serious inconvenience of having no traditional "barrel," from turning which might come temporary rest.

But it has paid over and over again,—not in money, for there has been no financial return. The sermons have been printed at a price to barely cover the cost.

But it has been a joy to preach to a host of people beyond the church walls. And from all over the world have come words which have made me glad in the friendship of those I have never seen.

The last two years and a half have been burdened with illness and constant suffering. I have been able to do only a very small part of what I have wished to accomplish. During all that time I could not possibly have written a sermon, nor could I have read one in public, had it been written. I have kept on, in spite of suffering, only because I have trained myself so that, so long as I could stand up, I could *speak*.

But now, at last, I am better. After my vacation rest, I *hope* to be somewhere near my old self once more.

So, with renewed courage and greeting to all friends, known and unknown, I trust we may continue our long and pleasant relationship another year.

M. J. SAVAGE.

NEW YORK, June 30, 1901.

VACATION RELIGION.

I TAKE as a text the words to be found in the seventh chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew, the twenty-first verse,—“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”

Every spring, as we approach the time when most ministers go off for a period of rest and recuperation and some at least of the churches are closed, there is a certain type of newspaper paragraph which always appears. Ministers are spoken of as though they were going away from their religious duty. The churches which close their doors are spoken of as though they for a time were ceasing all religious occupation.

It seems to me a strange misconception of what religion means; and so at the outset I wish to call your attention to some of the very plainest and simplest of the teachings of Jesus as bearing on this matter.

Who is it, according to his teaching, who is to be accepted of the Father, recognized as fit subjects for the kingdom of heaven in this world and felicity in the next? They are never those who simply engage in what are popularly called “religious exercises.” Jesus nowhere enjoins religious exercises in that sense. He says it is not those that say, Lord, Lord, that go through the forms and make the professions, that are fit subjects for the kingdom: it is those that do the will of the Father. It is not those who attend the synagogue worship or who bring their offerings to the temple. It is those who worship the Father, whether in Jerusalem or anywhere else around the world, in spirit and in truth.

The ones who appeared religious, made long prayers in the synagogues or standing on the street corners, Jesus always spoke against. It was the one who, in real contrition of heart, smote upon his breast and confessed that he was a sinner that Jesus commended. He said: If you are to engage in prayer, do not make any public show of it. Go quietly into your closet and shut the door, and pray to the Father who seeth in secret.

I do not mean by this that Jesus would have found fault with the open churches, or church attendance, of the modern world, in themselves considered. I think he would have found a great deal of fault with a good many of the services; and he would question the point where we are accustomed to lay our emphasis.

In the lesson which I read from the fifth chapter of Matthew is one of the most significant passages of Scripture with which I am acquainted as bearing on this whole question. Jesus says that the law is not to pass away until it is accomplished, not one jot or tittle is to be taken away. He does not say anything against their bringing offerings to the temple; but he does lay down a duty preliminary to that, which is of the utmost importance and which I think we too rarely consider. He says, If you bring your gift to the altar, and there — what? Remember that you have done something wrong? No. If you remember that any one of your brothers has anything against you, — he does not say whether justly or unjustly, — if there is a breach of human fellowship, no matter how caused, then leave your gift before the altar and go and heal that breach first, then come and offer your gift.

That is, Jesus distinctly and definitely places the perfection of our human relationships as a bar to entrance to the temple or any public place of worship until those relationships be right. We cannot come to God so long as we are out of right relation with our fellow-men, because coming to God is not entering a temple, not bringing an offering, not

reading a Scripture nor singing a hymn nor making a prayer. You may go through all these, and be the diameter of the universe away from God; and you may do none of these things, and be folded close to his heart. You approach God by becoming like him; and you become like him by cultivating the divine spirit of love and tenderness and forgiveness and help.

I speak of this simply to show where Jesus places the emphasis; so that it seems to me we may be quite clear in our minds that religion is not essentially or necessarily a "service" of any kind. We misunderstand when we so conceive it; and yet it seems to me that this is one of the most popular misconceptions of the world. People go to church of a Sunday. They go through with all the services. They go away with a sort of feeling that they have performed their religious duty until next Sunday. Or, if they are accustomed during any part of every day to have a period of seclusion, of meditation, of Scripture reading, of prayer, they are accustomed to think that that is specifically the performance of their religious duty for the day. Then they go about their ordinary affairs.

We precisely reverse things when we so think or speak. Religion,—what is it? Is it a church? Is it a Bible-reading? Is it singing hymns? Is it prayer? Is it the performance of a ritual? Is it a service of any kind? Religion is feeling and life. And in what relation do these things stand to religion? We will see in a moment.

Suppose all the churches were blotted out of existence, every Bible destroyed, every hymn-book, every ritual,—everything which is the external manifestation of religious thought and feeling. Suppose they were all blotted out of existence. Would man, then, be any less a religious being than he is now? Which came first, altars, temples, churches, priesthoods, rituals, services, or — religion?

Religion was first; and it is because man is essentially and eternally a religious being that these other things exist.

The church did not make man a religious being. The Bible did not make man a religious being. The fact that man was a religious being created the church, the Bible, all the external manifestations and forms that we are accustomed to as associated with religion. You see, then, we need precisely to reverse our ideas.

And when we have these forms, when we have the church, the Bibles, the prayers, the rituals, and the services,— what of them? Are they the religion? No, friends, they may be a specious appearance only, a substitute for religion. If they are real, if they are genuine, they are only the manifestation of religious emotion, the channel through which the religious feeling of man may flow towards others.

Have we done with our religious service when we have done with the church for the day, and then go about our ordinary avocations, engage ourselves in secular affairs? When we have finished with our church services and are ready to go out into the world again, we have just been getting ready to be religious. For religion is life, or it is nothing; and all these religious services, as we are accustomed to call them, are of value only as they prepare us, stimulate us, hearten and strengthen us to live the religious life.

The church stands in about the same relation to practical religion that a drill-hall or a military encampment may to the patriotic defence of one's country by means of war. You go to a hall and drill: is that fighting for your country? Is that a defence of your country? You go out on to the military field; and the troops there are deployed and displayed, and engage in their manœuvres. Is that the manifestation of patriotism? Why, you are only getting ready for the field of battle; and if you go to the drill-hall and then go home, or to the military field for review and then go home, you have done nothing.

So, when you have done what most people call the performance of their religious duties, you have either done

nothing at all or you have only begun with the preparation for doing something, that is all. The field of religion is life.

And so,—and this is what I am leading to,—when the church closes this summer for two or three months, is there to be a religious interregnum? does religion cease? does the practical living of the religious life cease while the church is closed? If there has been any religion here in this church during the last winter, it will not cease its activity and operation merely because this building is closed and the people accustomed to gather here from week to week are scattered over the country, across the seas, and around the world. If there has been any religious life, it has been in the hearts and the lives of the people; and they carry it with them, and live out that religious life, wherever they may be.

We have injured religion by allowing our minds to entertain a false and wrong division of the world between what is ordinarily called sacred and what is called secular. If we remember that this is God's world, that all its forces are God's forces, and that we are his children, and that, no matter how we may be occupied, we are face to face with God wherever we may be, that we are dealing with God's forces and methods of activity wherever we are, why, then, by and by we shall come to comprehend that the universe is sacred all through, from centre to circumference,—everywhere,—all sacred, and that the field of religion is in our every-day life, at home in our family, with our friends, in the midst of our books, in our pleasures, in our business occupations, in travel, or wherever we may be.

Living right, true, helpful lives,—this is religion; and all religious exercises, so called, are of value only as they help us to live this simple, divine, human life.

This church is to be closed. What, then, will those of you who have been accustomed to be here from Sunday to Sunday do during the summer? What kind of religion will you illustrate? You will not, I trust, think that religion is

left behind, that you are taking a vacation from religion of two or three months.

There are two classes of us, those who for one reason or another must spend the larger part of the summer in town and those who will have the ineffable privilege of getting away for a time into the country or by the sea. Let me speak some very simple things, because, after all, the larger part of our lives is made up of common and simple elements.

Suppose you are compelled to spend the summer in town or for one reason or another have chosen to do so. Suppose the weather is very uncomfortable, as it has been for the last few days. Here is a field at any rate, and at once, for the exercise of one of the finest, sweetest qualities of human nature ; that is, patience and good-humor in the midst of circumstances that do not tend to the cultivation of those qualities.

You remember Dickens makes Mark Tapley say that there is no credit in being jolly when everything goes according to one's wishes : it is only when we are in the midst of difficulties that we can claim any credit for being patient and sweet-tempered and true. Let us at least be patient in the midst of conditions that tend to impatience.

And, to carry the matter one step farther, if we cannot be happy ourselves, let us see to it that we are not so inexcusably selfish as to make other people unhappy because we must be. Just one word in regard to this matter of being happy ourselves.

I think—and I believe you will agree with me—that being happy is a good deal more important than the weather. In other words, it is not worth while to sacrifice happiness for a matter of that sort which we cannot control. Happiness is a very important thing in human life. Let us then say : We will be strong enough to master these conditions, and not let them master us. We will be patient ; and we will find happiness and peace, whatever our circumstances may be.

And, as I said a moment ago, there is a more important matter still. My happiness is very important, perhaps, to

me ; but I stand in personal relationship during the week — and I must — with a good many other people,— with the members of my household, with neighbors and friends. Now I simply have no business, whether I am happy or not, to make my irritability and unhappiness run over the limits of my own personality, and invade the lives of other people. I have no right to make other people unhappy simply because I may be.

And yet it is one of the commonest things in the world, if a person is a little irritable, to take a certain kind of satisfaction in making the feeling contagious. Here is one way in which we may in a very simple fashion practise a noble religion during vacation time.

Then, remember, we say "everybody is out of town." It seems so, because nearly all our friends are ; but, of the four millions of people who make up New York, how many are in Europe or yachting or playing golf in the country or resting in the shadow of the hills ? How many of them are away ? Just a very small fragment. Let us then, even if we cannot do any more, cultivate a feeling of sympathy with those who are tied to their tasks, no matter what the weather may be. Let us cultivate this divinest of all faculties and feelings that folds in its arms all those that need, and that would help if it could. If we cannot do much, we can at least cultivate this sympathy that would do if it might.

But there are many things we can do. I referred among my notices to the Flower Mission, to the distribution of delicacies among the sick in the hospitals, the poor in the tenements. There is somebody, surely, if you have to stay in town, who is unspeakably less fortunate than you are, and whom you can help a little. There is somebody who is sick, somebody who is lame or shut in. If you have a horse and carriage, there is somebody who does not ; and you can share your drives with them. You can send a flower, you can carry a little delicacy, you can go and speak a word of sympathy and cheer. How many faces are there in this

city who must be here all the summer through, that would lighten at the reflection of your smile, that would be cheered and heartened by some word that you can speak!

Here is a field for vacation religion. Do what you can to make the summer a little brighter for somebody else. I have learned, you have doubtless learned it, too, though we frequently forget it, that there is no way by which we can become unconscious of our own unpleasant situations and feelings so quickly and so completely as by letting a consciousness of the sorrows and troubles of somebody else take the place of them. Forget yourself and remember somebody else, and you will find yourself happy before you know it; and, if you have a pain or disability, you will find that it has faded out of sight.

Now a word to those of us who, like myself, are to be in the country. I preach to myself a good many times when you think I am preaching to you. Some intimate friend will say to me now and then, You had better take a part of that to yourself; and my reply is: Why, I have taken the whole of it to myself. I try to preach a good deal better than I live. I try to preach my own ideals as well as the ideals of other people; and then all together we will try to attain those ideals.

What shall we do who go into the country? In the first place, a word about Sunday. Shall we keep Sunday in the country, or shall we forget that there is any such day? This question, of course, applies also to those who spend the summer in town, and who from time to time are able to get away for Sunday, if no longer, as I hope the most of you will be able to do.

Shall we go to church Sunday morning if there is an opportunity? Let me hint one or two practical things in that direction. If you are where there is a little struggling Unitarian church, a church of our faith, why, I advise you to go. Suppose the minister is not over-brilliant. There are only a few brilliant ministers in the world.

Suppose he does not entertain you overmuch. Is that all you go to church for, to be entertained? Suppose you remember for a little while that one of the most important things about going to church is not what you can get, but what you can give. Suppose you try to hearten that little congregation and encourage that minister who is doing the best he can by giving him a little touch and life of the town while you are in the country. He will feel stronger, he will do better work for it.

I would go to church, then. There is one excuse for ministers not going to church for perhaps a little time that you may not think of. You know it is said that, if you should stand a man up in a certain place and make him stay there, and arrange to have one single drop of water fall on his head every five minutes, inside of twenty-four hours he would be insane.

Something a little similar to this is the minister's life. Once in seven days comes the one great, absorbing effort of the week,— in seven days again, in seven days again, again, again, until you have no idea what a relief it is for a few weeks, at any rate, to get away and forget that such a thing as Sunday exists.

But it seems to me — I am not a business man : I leave it to your judgment — that, if I were a business man, I should find rest in going to church once a week. You get away from your routine by going to church. I continue my routine by going. You get away from business care and the ordinary thoughts of life, and have your spiritual nature appealed to, played on ; and you are stimulated, inspired, uplifted, called into personal relation with God. You ought to find rest then.

Now I have not a word to say against Sunday amusements. I have not time this morning, neither is this the occasion, to discuss the Sunday problem. I will simply say that there is no reason whatever in the Bible or in ecclesiastical history, or anywhere else, for the existence of the Puritan, or ordi-

nary American, Sunday. There is absolutely no basis for it anywhere. What do I mean by that? I mean that it is absurd and childish to suppose there is anybody up in heaven who is going to be angry with you for doing anything on Sunday which it is right to do on any other day of the week.

But that is not the question, practically. No matter how we have come by it, we have inherited this magnificent gift of one day in seven, the gift of release from the drudgery and toil and burden and care of life; and the men of the world are anything but wise who take one single step towards blotting out the distinction between Sunday and the other six days. Very foolish and unwise are the laboring men who take any step which may lead to this one grand day being stolen from them as a day of rest and added to their already too heavy burden.

We have inherited this day; and it is a grand opportunity. An opportunity for what? For us to remember that we are children of God, to remember that we are men, to remember that we are something more than laborers, something more than machines, more than dollars, more than the routine of daily life. It is an opportunity; and, if we are wise, we shall guard it as one of the most sacred things that has come to us from the past.

What would I do with Sunday, then, if I had my way? I would have Sunday in the city, by the sea, in the country, no matter where, sedulously and sacredly set apart for the higher self. If there is no church you can go to, make a church of your own, if it is of only one. Give an hour, at any rate, to some sacred reading. Go apart by yourselves, commune with God, commune with your own higher life; and remember that you are a man, and cultivate and train this highest and noblest side of your nature.

Then, Sunday afternoon or Sunday evening, devote the time to recreation as much as you will, only put a hyphen after the "re," and make it re-creation; because there is any

quantity of what is called recreation that is really dissipation. That is not recreation which leaves a man physically, mentally, morally weaker and more demoralized than he was when he began : that is not recreation, it is dissipation.

Use the latter half of Sunday freely, simply, lovingly, trustfully, for recreation, whether it is walking in the woods, sailing, driving, playing golf, no matter what, so you are the better for it physically, and in every way, when you are done. That is what I would have you do on Sunday, whether you are in town or in the country.

There is one thing, for you who are going into the country, which I would like to suggest. If a man has a religion that is really worth anything to him, he wants to do with it something different from what he does with his ordinary possessions : he wants to give it away ; for it is one of those things that, the more you give away, the more you have left. If you really believe in your religion, you want to share it, because you know in your own heart that it is the grandest thing in all the world.

Now there is one practical way in which you can do a great deal in this direction during the summer. Send to the American Unitarian Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston : they will furnish you with a large number and variety of pamphlets, written by the best men we have, setting forth our thought, our view of the universe and of God and man,—our whole conception of the religious life. You can have these for the asking. Put them in your trunks, and take them away with you. You will find people everywhere hungering for a new thought, for a more cheery view of life, a more trustful view of God, and a more hopeful outlook for man.

And, for the rest, your religion in the country will be just like your religion in town every day of the week. As I have already said to you, the religious life is the daily life,—Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday ; and Sunday is only stimulus and uplift and help. But the field

for your religion is every day; and so, while you are off in the country, lead a noble, sweet, true, high, helpful life. Learn to think of the sweetest and best things the country suggests. Do not let the town tag after you in the country.

I marvel as I see people who go into the country try to efface the country; try to civilize it, and make it as near like the city as they can; try to carry their town life in the country, surround themselves with people, amusements, dances, parties, all sorts of things that occupy them during the winter in town. I do not see why they go to the country at all.

Try to lead the sweet, wholesome, outdoor life of the country while you are in the country; and let the fumes and poisonous airs of the town, all its contagions, be swept away by the west winds that blow from the hills. If you sit on hotel piazzas and talk, talk of the things that are all around you: do not talk gossip, do not carry town slanders to vitiate the clear air of sweet hills and fields. Learn what the country means. If you do not know already, there are books that will help you. Buy a book about bird life, insect life, tree life, shrub life, grass life, fern life, fish life, any kind of life of which the country is full. So learn to look, to observe, to listen, to understand what is going on all around you, and you will find yourself rapt and absorbed by a new and sweeter earth.

For one of the blessed things of going into the country is this; and let me preface what I am going to say by another remark. I am not one of those who believe that the country is much nearer to God than the town. There is a saying, "God made the country, and man made the town." I do not believe a word of it, in the sense in which it is used. If man is God's most marvellous work, and the wonderful mechanism of the town is man's greatest work, then you can get a little nearer to God in town than you can in the country. But that is not the way it is ordinarily looked upon; and, at any rate, it is true that in the country you can get very close to God.

If you remember, it is true that you can recognize the fact that you are in the very workshop of the Almighty when you are in the country. As you watch the unfolding of a blade of grass, as you mark how the rains sculpture the hills, how all the influences of the air are at work, you will see the processes of creation just as much as did the angels who are fabled to have sung their joy on the first morning of creation.

God is at work creating now just as much as he ever was. Learn, then, to watch him at his work, and to feel the reverence that ought to swell up in every human heart at the thought of being in the divine presence. The beauty all around you is God's beauty; the majesty of the hills, of the sea, God's majesty; the rest and the peace that come to you in their presence are God's very benediction.

So, as you are in the midst of these scenes, learn to feel that you can place your ear so you can hear the very beating of God's heart, and can come into personal touch with his divine life.

God bless you then, whether in the town or in the country, during the summer months, and bless you with health, with rest, with peace, and help you to live so close to him, so tenderly, so simply and sweetly with each other, that we may come back in the fall, not with a consciousness that there has been a religious interregnum, but with the feeling that we have simply been living the religious life where we have been, and that we have come back with hearts and minds rested and strong, so that we can do more and better work for God and our fellows than we have ever been able to do in the past.

Father, let Thy great peace come into our souls at this hour. We thank Thee that, though this phase and kind of work may cease or be changed for a while, we do not go away from Thee. We do not go away from our religious life; for that is the life lived with Thee, and in the love and service of our fellow-men, now and evermore. Amen.

UNITARIAN CATECHISM

BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation

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